2. Ray E-5 (1928-1930) 1932 Southeast Salish
Sanpoil

THE CYCLE OF LIFE

BIRTH AND INFANCY

In considering the life of the individual it is necessary to begin with conception, for the actions of the parents during the months prior to birth of a child were considered of major importance in determining the characteristics and fortunes of that child. The mother's conduct was of greater importance than the father's as regarded the child's future, and the majority of the tabus were directed against her, but the father's actions were also considerably circumscribed. The first pregnancy tabus were more strict than those enforced subsequently, or at least they were more rigidly complied with. During the latter months of the first pregnancy a woman's mother usually stayed close by her, encouraging her, acquainting her with customary methods of discharging duties which befell a mother, and making certain that the pregnancy tabus were not broken. Since residence was patrilocal it was necessary for the pregnant woman (sɪtsɪnťukui'ltxᵘ) to change temporarily her abode to that of her mother. The husband usually stayed with his own people until shortly before the child's arrival. 843

The period of the first pregnancy was characterized by Burke as one of unhappiness and fear. It seems that the older women, including the mother, repeatedly cautioned the young woman that she would die if any of the multitudinous tabus were broken.[1] In addition to the observance of these tabus, the woman was required to undergo a regular program of physical exercise. This consisted principally of swimming (in cold water), walking, running, and (recently) horseback riding. A pregnant woman was required to get up no later than sunrise and was not allowed to sleep during the daytime. These rules were designed to strengthen the woman in preparation for the ordeal to come. 152 861 843

There was no tabu against quarreling, but care had to be taken about insulting another or incurring his ill will for fear he might have power to inflict malfortune upon the child. The woman was required to eat only lightly during pregnancy, else her health would be impaired, the child's head would be large and delivery difficult. Specific food tabus usually applied both to a woman and her husband. Some of these follow: Speckled trout was prohibited; if eaten the child would cry a great deal and shake like a trout. Rabbit was not to be eaten; if it were the child would have weak legs. The flesh of the hawk and eagle or anything killed by those birds were tabu; if the tabu were broken the child would have cramps. If pheasant were eaten the child would cry until out of breath, then have convulsions. Meat in general was not eaten for an indefinite period preceding childbirth, and at no time during pregnancy was any meat eaten which was not strictly fresh. Eating of the fool hen was prohibited; else the child would be foolish. 262 [578] 843

Tabus other than those relating to food were of various natures. A pregnant woman was permitted to attend funerals, but not to look at the corpse. If she did her child would be cross-eyed and open-mouthed, like the corpse. She was not allowed to go near any thing that had been recently killed, and had carefully to 784 843

[1] Burke knew of only one woman that had actually died during childbirth.

2: Ray E-5 (1928-1930) 1932 Southeast Salish Sanpoil

784 avoid stepping over blood; failure to observe these rules would not affect the child
843 but would impair the father's luck in any venture. Restrictions applying to both the woman and her husband included these: A rattlesnake must not be killed or the child would cry and writhe like a rattlesnake. It might turn green and swell up. Crossing an otter's track would result in the child's "crawling" like an otter and taking very long to learn to walk. If a horse were lassoed or any animal tied or roped the child would become entangled with its cord during delivery. Sarcasm or arrogant retort on the part of either parent would result in the child's being ill tempered and impudent. To distort the features would cause the child to have features permanently disarranged in a similar manner. Holding the breath would make the child unable to breathe when born. To beat an animal would cause pain and injury to the child. There was no restriction on smoking.

755 A man took care not to laugh at old or crippled persons while his wife was
843 pregnant for fear the baby would be crippled. He was especially circumspect in his speech when a shaman was near for if he were critical, insulting, boastful or facetious at such a time the baby would probably never be born and the woman would die.

Some shamans were reputed to be able to determine the sex of a child before birth. They charged in advance for giving such information. It was only necessary to look at the woman's back to make the determination.

755 Barren women sometimes enlisted the services of a shaman. This was only
842 done at one of the winter dances. The shaman seated the woman before the center pole, sat down in front of her and held one end of a short section of service berry limb on her head. He soon told her why she was childless and whether or not she would bear children thereafter.

844 The pregnant woman did not isolate herself until the labor pains appeared. She then retired to the menstrual hut or a partitioned off part of the house. An old woman usually accompanied her. The professional mid-wife was unknown. The woman who assisted received no compensation for her services. In preparation for delivery (stukwi'ltx^{w}) two stakes were driven into the ground about eighteen or twenty inches apart and about two feet high. When the labor pains became frequent and severe the woman kneeled on the ground, placing one knee against each stake and grasping the tops of the stakes with her hands. There was no attempt to give relief to the woman during labor. The assistant covered the ground with bunch grass or laid down a tule mat for the child to be delivered upon. When delivery was obviously near at hand she rubbed the woman's abdomen with downward motions, gave her hot water to drink, heated pine needles and held them against her abdoman, and gave her advice as to the proper muscular tensions for the best results. When not otherwise occupied, and during actual delivery, the helper kneeled behind the woman and pulled down on her shoulders. As soon as expulsion was complete the assistant tied the umbilical cord (ti'mus) tightly with deer sinew four or five inches from the baby's body. She then bit it off at that point. Rupture was considered more possible if the cord were cut shorter. The child was immediately immersed in a basket of cool water and rubbed vigorously.

2: Ray E-5 (1928-1930) 1932 Southeast Salish
Sanpoil

This stimulation started the child's breathing and the washing cleansed it. The face of the infant was then massaged to "smooth out ugly lines" and improve the features. The legs were rubbed to straighten them so that the child would not be bow-legged. The arms were similarly rubbed. Then the infant was wrapped in buckskin or coyote fur and the head was bound with buckskin to insure roundness and eliminate the distortion accompanying birth. Flattening was never practiced. This completed the immediate attention given the child. It was then laid on its back on a pile of bedding; occasionally it was turned from one side to the other.

The mother was given a decoction of herbs immediately after delivery to prevent excess bleeding. As soon as the after-birth (untuqsi'ltən) was eliminated it was completely disposed of by burying. It was never burned. The mother went to bed where she remained for several hours. During this time absorbents (grass, shredded bark) were used to care for the bleeding. These were later burned. After a maximum of one day's complete rest the mother took charge of the child, but continued to lie down when not engaged in that care.

A woman occasionally went off alone into the woods and bore her child without assistance. Although such action probably often was traceable to timidity alone, ulterior motives were sometimes involved. If the woman did not want the child she was about to bear, this seclusion gave her an opportunity to return to camp with the baby dead and declare that it had been born dead. If this were not true and the facts were discovered the woman was subjected to severe lashing upon order of the chief. Nevertheless, Burke declared, such methods of controlling family size were occasionally resorted to.

A shaman was called at the time of childbirth only when delivery could not be accomplished normally. In such a case any shaman could function, for the procedure was not specialized, but certain shamans had specific talents of this nature.[2] No objective measures were taken; the shaman did not touch the patient. He attempted to discover the cause of the difficulty as in any case of illness and treat it accordingly.[3]

In the event of a miscarriage the fetus was buried immediately.

Certain post-natal observances were incumbent upon the father if the welfare of the child were to be protected. These had to be discharged very shortly after the infant's arrival. The usual procedure involved catching a dog or horse and beating it severely, or riding the horse until it was exhausted and frothed at the mouth. If neither animal were available the father himself ran until he could go no farther. If thus custom were not observed the child would cry a great deal, be irritable and have convulsions. Except at this time, however, the parent dared not kill any animal by beating it until the child was several weeks old, or the child would be ill-affected rather than benefited. If either parent threw deer sinew or feathers into a fire the baby would have cramps and convulsions, "writhing like the burning feathers or sinew."

[2] See page 102.
[3] See page 204 f.

171 854 said that the Inkamip band of the Northern Okanagon used the second type (an oval board with square-cut bottom and with attached pouch). She was using this type for a very young infant for her own six-months old baby and affirmed she had invented it herself!

Cradles made of bark were not used by the Southern Okanagon, but were known as in use by the Thompson. However, bark cradles of some sort were made locally by little girls for their dolls.

854 442 The labor of constructing a cradle was apportioned between the sexes: men prepared the wooden board from a dry pine, women made the skin pouch and other parts and put the whole together.

854 [843] 181 The baby's first cradle was prepared before the child was born. This was a buckskin sack within which a board was placed for stiffening (Figure 18)." [1] This wooden board (an inch thick) was oval with rather straight sides. Four holes were bored in it (a wedge was used as a boring tool), one pair near the top and the other at the bottom, but all four near the edge of the board (Figure 17, a, 1). The buckskin intended for the pouch was cut as in Figure 17, a, 2, with slits at the top and bottom reaching nearly to the board. The two upper extensions of this skin were then lapped and sewn, and the two lower ones likewise, thus forming a pouch. This was fastened to the board, which was placed inside it, by a thong passing through the upper set of holes and another through the lower set. These thongs thus passed outside the buckskin at the back of the cradle and were knotted on the inner face of the board.

854 The mattress (.nkEkɛ·ɛ'kEtEn, "pad for the back") was a buckskin sack exactly the size of the board, stuffed with feathers. Two smaller sacks were made to serve as pillows; one under the head at the very top of the board, the other (under the knees ?) where the lower set of holes was placed. Buckskin thongs ran through each of these pillows, through the mattress beneath, and passed under the thongs which held the pouch to the board. As the thongs were soft skin strips, the knots caused no annoyance to the baby. Loops of buckskin were fashioned of a single thong along the opposing edges of the opening of the pouch. The lacing thong was then passed through these. It would seem that these cradles were hardly larger than the baby so that the pouch fitted snugly.

The older type of child's second cradle was an elongated trapezoid. Like all second cradles it was almost twice as long as the first cradle just described. An extension of the board at the middle of its upper edge, some three inches long and also of trapezoidal shape, served as a handle. Ordinarily, it was reported, the corners of these trapezoids

[1] [For footnote, see p. 50 (C), category 116. -- Analyst]

805 together for two hundred, three for three hundred, etc., and a small extra piece tied on to represent a thousand days. While the device is indiginous, being known also to neighboring peoples, we may doubt the earlier existence of the higher counts (see also Religion). It was also said that women kept [843] track of the passage of the nine lunar months of pregnancy by making a knot for each month, counting from the first failure to menstruate until one month after the birth [745] of the child. Old people were said to keep track of how long their children had been dead in similar fashion, but we may doubt this. Knotted string records were called catca'sq!. They were not used as memoranda sent with messengers who carried invita- [211] tions.

p. 70 (B)

THE INDIVIDUAL LIFE CYCLE

By MAY MANDELBAUM

THE LIFE CYCLE

851 A baby born among the Sinkaietk had no real social position. His mother remained
852 in seclusion in the special lodge in which she had given birth to him, and none but women touched him. After some days he was brought forth to be welcomed and blessed by the community, represented on this occasion by a small group of the old people. Then, strapped on his cradle board, he accompanied his mother as she resumed her routine tasks. Not until he was a year or more old was he
[553] given real social status. Then a feast was held in his honor and he was given one of the family ancestral names.

855 For a few years his life was very easy. He was trained to keep out of danger, and to respond politely to adults and their requests, but he had no responsibilities and few duties, and was free to spend most of his time in play with the other children of the village.

857 As he grew older he was made to assume further duties, and a somewhat more formal
861 education was begun. The boy learned to hunt and to fight; the girl assisted in root-digging and berry-picking. In the evening the children heard the folk tales, and the moral lectures given particularly for them by the old people. From the major part of
[881] the religious life they were definitely excluded until the series of rites which took place at puberty.

883 After puberty, childish pursuits abandoned, the adolescent spent his time learning techniques and preparing to take on
885 adult functions. After some years spent thus it was time for marriage, which was rather
[591] unceremonious. Then the couple went to live at either parental home. Life continued in much the same fashion as before, the boy sharing the masculine pursuits of the group, the girl busy with food-getting and cooking.
[843] The wife's pregnancy placed herself and her husband under many restrictions and tabus for the sake of the child, but a short time after its birth the old routine was reestablished.

554 When "powers" for special aptitudes came back to the adult at the winter dance, social differentiation for the individual really began. This brought about some differences in position, which meant, however, only purely individual prestige.

888 With increasing age came change in po-
761 sition, less active roles being played by the elders. Finally came desertion or loss of the spirit guardian, and with it, death.

591 about between the homes of the two, spending some time also alone or with other relatives. Ordinarily a young couple went first to live with the husband's parents. The girl assisted the female head of the household, leaving the older woman largely the task of supervising. A young wife was instructed in her duties by this matron, but was already fairly well acquainted with most of the techniques, with which she had been working since puberty. If the mother-in-law was stingy, they might have separate households in the same house, keeping their supplies separate and eating apart. But ordinarily, since they managed to maintain pleasant relations, they lived as a single family. The young couple would remain as long as they cared to, then go to the home of the bride's parents.

Men might set up homes of their own any time they desired, but generally this was not before several children were born to them. Many of the winter villages were made up of groups of relatives of different degrees.

595 A man who had several non-related wives usually left each with her own family. Co-wives shared equally economically, unless the husband particularly favored one. Each [601] cared only for her own children and was swa wa'sa (mother's sister) to all the others, whether really related or not. As there was no institutionalized head wife, jealousies often arose. Several informants said that the wife most loved by the husband had authority over the others; David Isaac, a Northern Okanagon, said that it was always the first wife. The informants insist that most men who were married had at least two wives, but chiefs, shamans and good hunters often had more. The only explanation, and a very probable one, is that there was a very high divorce rate.

Johnnie described plural marriage as follows. In the old days a man who was a good hunter would have many wives, as many as five. Several sisters would marry one man. All lived together in one house. The husband "took turns" sleeping with his wives, one each night. There was no jealousy be- [843] tween the wives. The husband did not stop sleeping with his wife when she was pregnant, but after the baby was born he had no intercourse with her for quite a few days. The wives divided the food he brought home and took turns cooking it for him. When he died they might continue living together, or, each taking such household articles as she had made, build little separate houses in which to live. After the mourning period of a 587 year or so the man's brother, who was the 595 best hunter and had been chosen to care for them, would come to the house. If he was already married he might visit back and forth between his other wife or wives and these women. If he had but one wife and there was only one widow, he might establish

CHILDBIRTH

842 If the woman did not become pregnant in due course of time after marriage she would eat herbs given or sold her by one of the old women who were wise in such lore. Should she remain barren, she would not be divorced but her husband would take another wife if he could afford it.

• 843 As soon as the woman knew she was pregnant, she had to observe a number of tabus. Most of these were dietary. If she ate salmon the child would gape and die as soon as it was born, while if she ate pheasant "it would cry too much. If she ate eggs the child would be born with a caul. She was encouraged to eat fool-hen, as this would assure a good disposition for the baby. (Hence a fool-hen's heart was also tied to the cradle.) If she looked upon a corpse the baby would be stillborn, while if she saw a wounded animal or person bleeding, or ate fresh meat, the baby would be born red and bloody, and would die unless she rubbed it with ashes of the red willow and grease.

There were some restrictions on the father as well, but only for a short time immediately before the birth. He must not exert himself too much lest the child also be tired. He was forbidden to hunt, for should he cut a deer's throat at this time the baby would die. Should he kill a grouse and its stomach swell, that of the baby would too. He avoided this by burning a piece of deer sinew. He had to continue these avoidances after the birth while his wife remained in seclusion. Usually a man did not go out hunting at all during this time. He and his wife were fed by relatives during the time she was in seclusion.

Aside from the food tabus there were no restrictions upon the mother. For instance, she might smoke, if she was one with power [791] to smoke. A woman shaman who became pregnant would continue to make cures until the time of birth. A woman was expected to go on with her work, and to arise early and go for a swim every morning. The other women would say to her, "Get up! Don't sleep so long, or the baby will have a big head or something! Go take a swim and don't be lazy." She would remain active, working up to the time of birth, so that the child would not become too large and cause a difficult delivery. For the last month or so she might have no intercourse with her husband, but this was not so important as its avoidance during the post-parturition period. Teit says that the woman must pray to the "Day Dawn" and the husband must take sweat baths, but the first of these was denied by Lucy Joe and the second not mentioned by our informants.

These tabus applied equally at the

[For footnote, see p. 120 (c), Category 116. -- Analyst]

843 birth of every child born to a couple.

Pregnancy was recognized by the failure to menstruate. The time for the birth was computed roughly by means of a string knotted monthly (Michel said daily), nine moons being known to be its duration. It was held that the period was longer for a first child.

844 When the time for the birth approached, the woman would go to the home of her mother if that were possible. Otherwise she would call her mother, mother-in-law, aunt, or any other matron to assist her. Such was not of necessity a woman with power, nor one who had children. No man could be present, and though the birth might perforce take place out of doors, it must never happen in the dwelling house. Many cases are remembered of women who went out for the day and had their babies en route, without any particular assistance. Some preferred to have their babies alone. This was considered as particularly appropriate for such women as had for a power animal some such thing as a mother eagle with her brood, or a bitch with young. If this happened the babe was wrapped in soft fur and brought back to camp. The mother had to spend the next ten nights in the lodge, and might not come home to the house. It was said that sometimes, instead of a completely separate lodge, one of the village menstrual lodges might be used.

If the birth took place in the proper fashion, in the lodge with one or more older women assisting, the mother sat or squatted on her heels; never lying down. The floor might be spread with fir boughs, but never with blankets or robes. The woman faced the door with her back to the fire in the center of the lodge. One of the assistants stood behind and held her shoulders, and if there were another she would squat in front and hold her arms. If there were only one assistant, a digging-stick was thrust into the ground for the mother to hold to for support.

845 If the delivery proved to be difficult, the assistant pressed on the mother's abdomen. Should she cry out unduly, her mouth and nose would be plugged. The attendants would scold her, saying, "You've got to help yourself, or you will die." Should these [791] efforts fail, a shaman might be called in, who would put water on the woman's head and blow on her. This would cause the baby to come quickly. If the shaman were male he would have to leave before the baby came, for no man might be present at the time of birth, particularly no man with power, as it would hurt his power. Should the husband have any power which might be useful under the circumstances, he too might help, but would have to leave before the crucial time. If there was difficulty in presentation, there might be efforts made by the midwives to turn the baby around, but these were seldom success-

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843

1^ Possibly the grouse is meant. Several varieties of pheasant have been introduced on the reservation and, in common with local whites, the Indians now use the name for birds of the grouse type. - L.S.

1^ [For context of this footnote, see p. 120 (A), category 116. -- Analyst]

6: Teit E-3 (1904-09)1930 Southeast Salish
Southern Okanogan; Sanpoil;
Colville; Lakes

527 from time to time. Singing and dancing were indulged in at nearly all entertainments and gatherings.

534 MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.—Drums used to beat time for singing and dancing were exactly like those of the Thompson. Rattles were also used in singing and dancing. They consisted of pebbles inclosed in wood, horn, or hide. Deer-hoof rattles attached to the ankles, knees, waist, elbows, and wrists were used. Others were attached to the end of a short stick. Beating of sticks on a hide or a board was also common in some kinds of dancing and singing. Rasps of notched sticks were also in vogue. In a few dances, such as the praying dance, there was no accompaniment to the singing. Flutes and whistles of several kinds were in use for serenading, but they were not used at dances.

276 PIPES AND SMOKING.—Smoking was indulged in by nearly all the adult men and by some of the women. Ceremonial smoking was practiced, especially at the beginning of serious undertakings, such as councils. Long ago the tubular pipe was in use. Some of these had figures of animals carved along the top and others were carved like an animal's mouth.[8] The simple bowl pipe was also in use, and the elbow pipe, which in later days supplanted all others. A disk-shaped stone pipe [9] was fairly common among the Okanagon, but I have not heard of its use among the Thompson. It may have been introduced from the south. Pipes were sometimes made of knots of wood. The tobacco smoked was the same kind as that used by the Thompson, and the kinnikinnick was also the same. It is said that a kind of clay pipe was sometimes made long ago.

XI. BIRTH, CHILDHOOD, PUBERTY, MARRIAGE, DEATH

843 PREGNANCY.—Numerous restrictions were put on a pregnant woman, especially during her first pregnancy. The object was to insure health and strength to the woman and her child, an easy delivery, and safety from supernatural harm for both mother and child. Pregnancy, especially the first time, was considered "mystery" in almost the same degree as adolescence and menstruation. The restrictions were almost the same as among the Thompson. The most important during the first pregnancy were the following: The woman had to wash and bathe regularly in cold water. She prayed to the Day Dawn. She had to avoid all bad smells, quarreling, agitation, and anything that might surprise or shock her. She must not eat any flesh of large game, but only that of birds and fish. She must not eat turtle. All flesh that she ate must be at least a day old. Her husband had to bathe often and to pray and purify in the sweat house.

844 BIRTH.—Women at childbirth were attended by an older woman, generally the mother, aunt, or grandmother, sometimes by more than

[8] See g, fig. 113; Field Mus. 111743.
[9] See i, figs. 107–109.